GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:17
ANSWERED ON:21.07.2015
Threatened/Endangered Species
K. Shri Parasuraman

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of threatened species in the country are on the Red list published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto;
(c) whether the Government has conducted any study or research to find out the reasons for many species being on the verge of extinction and/ or critically endangered; and
(d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof along with the corrective steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE
(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.
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STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 17 REGARDING 'THREATENED/ENDANGERED SPECIES' BY SHRI K. PARASURAMAN DUE FOR REPLY ON 21.7.2015

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per the Red list version 2015.2 published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), 96 species of mammals, 82 species of birds, 75 species of amphibians, 53 species of reptiles, 214 species of fish and 135 species of invertebrates in India are listed as 'Critically Endangered' (Extremely high risk of extinction), 'Endangered' (Very high risk of extinction) and 'Vulnerable' (High risk of extinction).

Decline in species diversity is a global phenomenon as habitats of wild animals and plants that are increasingly coming under human use. The country''s biodiversity faces a variety of threats, from increasing pressure by land use changes in natural habitats, demand of natural resources, pollution, and proliferation of invasive species. Additionally, climate change also have known effect on coastal and marine ecosystems resulting in rise in sea level, warming of the sea surface temperatures and ocean acidification leading to significant implications on the coastal and marine populations and productivity. Various programmes and policies of the government related to sustainable development take into account the need of conservation of our biological diversity and protection of threatened species.

(c) and (d) Government supports a large number of research and training institutions which have comprehensive research programmes and activities relating to conservation of biodiversity. These institutes have been conducting studies to find out reasons for decline or threats to the biodiversity in the country. The forest and wildlife conservation programmes are formulated based on the knowledge obtained from scientific studies.

The Government has taken the following steps for protection and conservation of wild animals in the country:

i. Protected Areas, viz., National Parks, Sanctuaries, Conservation Reserves and Community Reserves covering important wildlife habitats have been created all over the country under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to conserve wild animals and their habitats. Special programmes like 'Project Tiger' and 'Project Elephant' were launched for conservation of these endangered species and their habitats.

ii. A specific component of "Recovery programmes for saving critically endangered species and habitats' is provided in the Centrally Sponsored Scheme of 'Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats' for focused conservation action on selected critically endangered species.

iii. Legal protection has been provided to wild animals including rhinoceros against hunting and commercial exploitation under the provisions of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

iv. In addition to provision of stringent punishment for the offenders, the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 also provides for forfeiture of any equipment, vehicle or weapon that is used for committing wildlife offence(s).

v. Financial and technical assistance is provided to the State/ Union Territory Governments under the Centrally Sponsored Schemes for providing better protection to wildlife including endangered species and improvement of its habitat.

vi. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and

prosecute wildlife offenders.

vii. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up to ensure co-ordination among various officers and State Governments in connection with the enforcement of law for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.

viii. Strict vigil is maintained by the officials of State Departments of Forests and Wildlife.

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